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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4907

December 2, 2004

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Honorable Steven B. Schwalb, Chairperson
Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled
1421 Jefferson Davis Highway
Jefferson Plaza 2, Suite 10800
Arlington, VA 22202-3259

RE: Proposed Rule for Governance Standards under Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act

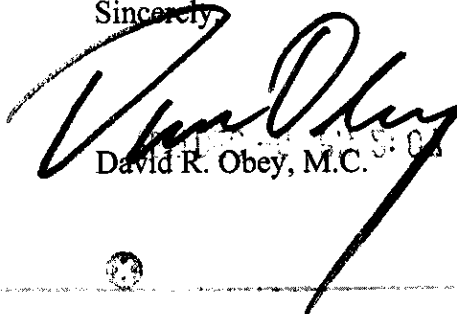
Dear Mr. Schwalb:

On Nov. 12, 2004, the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, which administers the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (JWOD), issued a proposed rule that would impose Sarbanes-Oxley type governance standards on community rehabilitation programs (CRPs).

These new regulations may or may not be justified but it is important that all interested parties have an opportunity to be heard. Currently, comments to the proposed rule are due on January 11, 2005, only 60 days after the proposed rule was published in the Federal Register. Moreover, the JWOD Committee has strongly recommended that comments be submitted by December 13, 2004 to ensure maximum consideration by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This amount of time appears to be insufficient for all interested parties to become familiar with the proposed regulations and to respond thoughtfully. As such, I urge you to provide for an extension to the comment period on the proposed rules.

Of great concern, according to members of the non-profit community rehabilitation organizations that operate the programs, is that the Committee has chosen to propose these regulations without adequate consultation with them and without fully considering the potential detrimental effect of such rules on programs that benefit severely disabled persons under JWOD. As such, I urge OMB and the Committee to provide an additional 180 days for meaningful consideration and comment prior to proceeding.

Sincerely,


David R. Obey, M.C.